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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)PAGE 01 CARACA 01294 071614Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AMAD-01	CA-02	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00
	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OCS-06	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01
	SNP-01	SP-01	SSO-00	SS-01	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00

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O 071614Z FEB 92 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8138
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
AMEMBASSY QUITO

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 01294

QUITO FOR GELBARD AND MCLEAN

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, AORC, CASC, PGOV, MARR, VE
SUBJECT: [REDACTED] ON THE
FEBRUARY 4 COUP ATTEMPT

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. POLOFF MET WITH [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ON FEBRUARY 6 TO DISCUSS THE FEBRUARY 4 COUP
ATTEMPT. [REDACTED] COMMENTED AS FOLLOWS.

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PAGE 02 CARACA 01294 071614Z

B1

CHAVEZ FRIAS

3. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CHARACTERIZED CHAVEZ FRIAS AS "UNUSUAL"
FOR A MILITARY MAN. FOR INSTANCE, HE CARRIED HIS OWN
POETRY AROUND THE CAMPUS, READILY RECITING IT UPON FINDING
A RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE. [REDACTED] REGARDED CHAVEZ FRIAS AS
"INTELLIGENT AND WELL-SPOKEN" AND CHARACTERIZED HIM AS A
"ROMANTIC NATIONALIST," A KIND OF VENEZUELAN GARIBALDI,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON

CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

DECLASSIFY AFTER: 6 FEB 2017

DATE/CASE ID: 22 JUL 2008 200503656

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WHO REGARDED HIMSELF AS DUTY-BOUND TO "SAVE" HIS FATHERLAND. [] DETECTED A STREAK OF PURITANISM IN CHAVEZ FRIAS -- A CHARACTERISTIC, [] WHICH OFTEN OCCURS IN JUXTAPOSITION TO FANATICISM.

THE COUP PLOTTERS' IDEOLOGY

B1

4. [] IS UNSURE THAT THE COUP PLOTTERS ESPOUSED AN IDEOLOGY. THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE SUGGESTS THAT THEY ARE "POPULISTS AND NATIONALISTS" WHO ELABORATED A CLASS-BASED POLITICAL THEORY WITH A STRONG MORALISTIC ELEMENT.

ANOTHER COUP ATTEMPT POSSIBLE

5. [] BELIEVES THAT ANOTHER COUP ATTEMPT IS POSSIBLE AS LONG AS VENEZUELAN CULTURAL VALUES REMAIN WHAT THEY ARE. "PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE MILITARY IS FINE," HE OBSERVED, "BUT MILITARY OFFICERS DO NOT CEASE BEING VENEZUELAN BY VIRTUE OF THEIR MILITARY EDUCATION." IN SO
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PAGE 03 CARACA 01294 071614Z
COMMENTING, [] WAS REFERRING TO THE PROMINENT PLACE OF DIGNITY, HONOR, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND PATERNALISM IN THE VENEZUELAN SCHEME OF VALUES.

WHY THEY WANTED TO KILL CAP

6. [] BELIEVES THAT THE COUP PLOTTERS EVIDENTLY WANTED TO KILL CAP TO PREVENT HIM FROM BECOMING ANOTHER "ARISTIDE," I.E., AN EXILED LEADER WHO WOULD ORGANIZE RESISTANCE AND HIS EVENTUAL RETURN WITH HELP FROM ABROAD.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COUP ATTEMPT

7. [] CHIEF FEAR IS THAT THE COUP ATTEMPT MAY IMPEDE OR DESTROY THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROGRAM, WHICH HE REGARDS AS ESSENTIAL TO THE COUNTRY. WHAT IS NEEDED IN POST-COUP VENEZUELA, [] IS BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNORS AND GOVERNED, AND LESS ARROGANCE AND CORRUPTION. HE IS SKEPTICAL, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH CHANGES WILL OCCUR.

B1

SOME ASPECTS OF NATIONAL LIFE IMPERVIOUS TO POLITICS

8. DESPITE THE COUP, [] SOME ASPECTS OF

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NATIONAL LIFE ARE IMPERVIOUS TO POLITICS, AT LEAST IN THE
SHORT TO MEDIUM RANGE. FOR INSTANCE, HE CONTINUED, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] STATE PETROLEUM COMPANY PDVSA
TO STUDY WAYS IN WHICH IT CAN MEET ITS MANPOWER NEEDS
DURING ITS PLANNED 5-YEAR EXPANSION PROGRAM.
SPECIFICALLY, [REDACTED]

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